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From the staff:

The views and values expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the individual staff of JCAN or NCC-J. We welcome all comments and concerns.

NOTE:

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Editorial

Kim Yong Gil: Crucifixion

From time to time I think of my death. Not in any morbid way, mind you. And if I could choose, I would either like to die laying down my life for another or all alone in quiet conversation with God. But I know not the day, less the means by which I will go.

Less than 200 meters from where I write this sit a group of men who, like me, know not the day they will be called. However, unlike me, they know the means by which they will die.

Continued on page 17

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Korean Legislator Ends Hunger Strike Over Textbook

The Christian legislator from Korea, Kim Young Jin, ended his water only six-day hunger strike on April 16 on the advice of doctors and supporters. They persuaded Mr. Kim to stop, although he wanted to continue. However, his health was at stake, and especially so considering that he had spent each night on the sidewalk with only a sleeping bag to keep himself warm.

Mr. Kim, 55, started his silent hunger strike on April 10 when he sat in front of the Diet building. On the previous day he had gone to the Diet, along with four other Korean legislators, to deliver a letter protesting the textbook issue. They wanted to meet with lawmakers but were refused. "I did not plan doing this hunger strike before I left Korea. But after praying all night, I made a decision at 6:00 AM to fast and sit until someone would talk with me. See, I only have this one suit on." It is spring in Tokyo, but the cold wind easily blows through a mere business suit.

He began the hunger strike directly in front of the Diet building. However, during the first night the police came four times asking him what he was doing and eventually he was forced to move. Perhaps they could not really believe a Korean lawmaker was taking this action. In the end, a Christian lawmaker gained permission for Mr. Kim to sit in front of the offices for the legislators, which is directly behind the Diet.

What is amazing about his hunger strike is that in spite of the spontaneity of the act, churches and organizations quickly mobilized to come out and support him when people read about it in the newspaper. The National Christian Council Japan, the Korean Christian Council, the Catholic Justice and Peace Committee, the United Church of Japan, seminaries, student organizations, and countless other organizations sent out appeals to support Mr. Kim and a number of people came down to sit alongside with Mr. Kim. Even a man from Nagoya came to sit in solidarity.

His purpose in coming to Japan was to protest the new Japanese textbooks, which he says distort wartime atrocities. The proposed revised Japanese junior high school history textbooks will leave out important parts of history such as the abduction and forced sex-slavery of thousands of 'comfort women' for Japanese soldiers during World War II. It will introduce different opinions about the 1937 Nanjing massacre by Japanese troops that make it appear some facts are ambiguous. "It's intolerable to misrepresent what Japan did in that era," said Mr. Kim. "It's intolerable to teach these opinions as facts in school."

Mr. Kim is a member of the Presbyterian Church in South Korea (PROK) and the Millennium Democratic Party. His fast ended with a Korean and Japanese prayer service. (Prayer services had been held daily in the morning and evening throughout his fast). He was then taken to a hospital for an examination and stayed overnight at the hospital. Mr. Kim left for South Korea the next day in a wheelchair, as his leg muscles were still very weak.



Day 2: Kim sitting with four other Korean lawmakers.

Many people came to support him in his week-long fast over the textbook issue. Among them, his friend, Rev. Ryuichi Doi, who is a member of the House of Representatives and an ordained minister in the Kyodan Church, Ms. Takako Doi, the Head of the Social Democratic Party in Japan, and many other NCCJ related people came. They prayed with him, brought him flowers and letters of support, and sat with him. Some of the National Christian Council of Japan (NCCJ) staff also slept out in the street with him at night in their sleeping bags to show our support.

The Japanese news carried a few articles. However, there was relatively little reported by the media even though reporters came a number of times, especially when Ms. Doi showed up two days in a row. The protest will continue with NCCJ and other groups.

We are very grateful to have received messages and words of encouragement from many ecumenical organizations, churches, missionaries, and people from all over the world. Some people started their own fast in their own community to show their solidarity. NCCJ is planning to call an urgent meeting for church leaders and other concerned people in Japan to plan further actions on the textbook issues. The torch is passed from Mr. Kim to us.

It would also be greatly appreciated if you could take time to send your concerns and a letter of protest about the textbooks to the head of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology. The email address is voice@mext.go.jp

TGY



Day 4: Kim sitting with Japanese lawmaker Rev. Ryuichi Doi (UCC-J pastor).

Letter from NCC-J

March 27, 2001

Letter of Request on Textbook Screening

We believe that it is our responsibility to recognise our past history correctly and convey it to the next generation. It is also necessary for us to honestly describe the history of Japan's invasion and colonial rule of Asian countries. We need to honestly tell other people the suffering and pain of these victims in order to build relationships with Asian countries based on peace and trust.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MECST) has screened the textbooks submitted by seven companies for social studies for use in the 2002 school year. It is reported that there will be no reference to "comfort women" in some of these textbooks and there will be fewer references, as compared to present textbooks, to Japan's role as an aggressor in World War II will. Also, the "Nanking Massacre" will be changed to the "Nanking Incident" with a note that scholars differ as to the actual extent of deaths and damage.

We are deeply concerned about the possible approval of these textbooks. The Atarashii Rekishi Kyokasho wo Tsukuru Kai (Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform) history textbook gained approval because it accepted 137 revisions requested by MECST. Mr. Kanji Nissho, the chair of Tsukurukai, said, "Our basic thoughts still remain" in spite of the revisions.

But this is the troubling aspect. The Tsukuru Kai history book presents Japan as a nation centered on the emperor using the ancient myth and legend of Emperor Jinn. It also emphasises the importance of the nation over the individual and beautifies Japan's invasion of Asia. We may, therefore, safely say that the Tsukuru Kai textbook is not appropriate at all for this era of democratic sovereignty, which is stipulated in our constitution. The Tsukuru Kai civic book is also permeated with the similar ideology of virtue of individuals sacrificing themselves for the nation and emperor, which clearly oppose the idea of peace and human rights in the constitution.

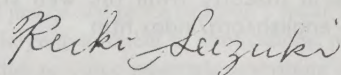
We still remember that the Japanese government received severe criticism within and outside the country when there was an attempt to distort the historical fact in the textbook in 1982. However, since then, we are aware that Cabinet members continuously make public statements that distort history. We believe that Japan will not come to good terms with the international society unless we understand the suffering and pain of these victimised people. We are also afraid that it becomes an obstacle to people to people exchange between Japan and Asia unless MECST deals with the textbook issues properly.

The Tsukuru Kai places value on superiority and calls admitting our sins of greed and oppression "masochistic." However, our humanity lies in the fact that we reflect people's pain and try to feel it as our own pain. And if we give pain to someone, we need to admit it as our sin. Apology restores human dignity and leads to create a sense of reconciliation and trusting relationships. We learned this by facing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and war responsibility of Japanese churches.

The predominant worldview is that the "comfort women" system is considered a war crime. Also, the spirit of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution is being looked at as one means towards international conflict resolution. We see this as a sign of hope: the 21st century as a century of reconciliation and cooperation.

These are our demands to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MECST):

- 1) Teach past history correctly through education based upon a deeper understanding of Japan's invasion of other Asian countries.
- 2) Disapprove the textbook submitted by the Tsukuru Kai, which emphasises praise for war for invasions in the past.
- 3) Guide those companies whose textbooks do not have any reference to "comfort women" to describe this as an historical fact.



Ms. Reiko Suzuki

Moderator

National Christian Council in Japan (NCC-J)

URGENT APPEAL: Stop the Japanese Government's Attempt to Rewrite History

Do you know what is happening in Japan?

Mr. Kim Young Jin, a Christian member of the legislature in South Korea, held a six-day silent hunger strike in April in front of the Diet to protest the approval of Japanese history textbooks. He started the fast after his visit to the Japanese Diet along with four other Republic of Korea politicians. Many Christians and various Christian groups in Tokyo and other parts of Japan came to participate in a relay hunger strike. A women's group in support of the forced 'comfort women' during the war also organized a sit-in at the same place on a later date.

Distortion of history to erase war crimes.

We are deeply concerned with the official approval of the Tsukuru Kai History Textbook because it can plant jingoistic nationalism in the hearts of the young by presenting Japan as a nation centered on the Emperor and using ancient myths and legends as real history. These books also emphasize the importance of the nation over the individual and exalts Japan's invasion of Asia. These new textbooks are against democratic sovereignty, which is stipulated in our Constitution. The books are also permeated with a similar ideology of the virtue of individuals sacrificing themselves for the nation and emperor, which clearly opposes the concepts of peace and human rights laid out in the Constitution.

The Textbook Review Council gave correction orders to the editors according to censorship rules. The Atarashii Rekishi Kyokasho wo Tsukuru Kai (Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform) accepted 137 revisions, as instructed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology, in the history textbook they submitted. The Tsukuru Kai History Textbook then gained approval. Mr. Kanji Nishio, the chair of Tsukuru Kai, mentioned that "our basic thoughts still remain" in spite of the revisions.

How can they censor what is no longer there? A glaring instance of this kind of missing piece of history is any references to the "Comfort Women." No mention of them appears in the "reformed" textbook, neither before nor after the so-called censorship. The purpose of the Pacific War is portrayed as the Great East Asian Sphere of Peace, an interpretation that Asian people who experienced Japan's colonization would reject. Some members of the Textbook Review Council wanted to reject the entire textbook, and it is a great loss to historical truth that their advice was not taken.

Furthermore, to ensure that students will be exposed to this view of history, the Ministry of Education has very cleverly changed who will select which textbooks are to be used in the classrooms. Previously, it was the teachers who made this choice, but politics has now transferred this selection to the local education boards.

If we choose to ignore what is happening now in Japan, it is very possible that this past history can and will repeat itself. It is urgent that Asian nations and all people who have experienced the reality of Japan's subjugation, challenge this new textbook and the kind of thinking that lies concealed behind it. It now remains up to those who shared the reality of this history during the Pacific war to see to it that its truth is not lost.

It is urgent. Local education boards will decide before summer which textbooks to use in their local schools. It is possible many school teachers are forced to use the distorted textbook and teach children wrong history ...unless we challenge this attempt to rewrite history.

Please help us

Pressure must be brought on the Japanese government to stop this kind of text from being officially accepted as a junior high school history textbook. Particularly we appeal to our Asian co-workers and friends for your help.

Needed: Media coverage. Official protests by scholars and organizations. Awareness raising. Fax & E-mail campaigns. Prayers and fasts. Public marches and demonstrations. Creative responses from every level.

- * Scholars of national history to challenge the scholarship that allows Japanese historians to present a nationalistic "view of history" as historical truth.
- * Organizations to mobilize locally and internationally to challenge the Japanese government, and the Ministry of Education, on their new version of Japan's role in the Pacific war.
- * Churches to remember those who suffered by organizing religious responses.
- * Individuals to participate in local efforts to protest this attempt to change history.
- * Send letters and articles in newspapers, magazines, bulletins.

Letters can be sent to:

Prime Minister Mr. Junichiro Koizumi
1-6-1 Nagata-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN, 100-8914
Tel: +81-3-3581-2361

Comments can be sent directly from the following web site:
www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/index-e.html

Minister of Education, Culture and Technology

Ms. Atsuko Toyama

3-2-2 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8959

Tel: +81-3-3581-4211 (reception)

Comments can be sent directly from the web site
www.mext.go.jp/english/org/index.htm

(Please send a copy to us at our address on page 1.)

Thank you

Letter from NCC-J

2001.2.5

To our brothers and sisters with the National Christian Churches of Taiwan, the glory of the Lord be with you. As you know we continually support you in your work to spread the Gospel and increase ecumenicism.

The National Christian Council Japan long ago arrived at the position against using nuclear power to create electricity, and so we were very encouraged last fall with President Chen's pledge to abolish nuclear plants. However, according to Japanese newspapers, last January 31 your parliament has decided to go ahead with the fourth nuclear plant and is now seeking approval to begin construction. We have deep concerns about the future direction of your government's nuclear policy.

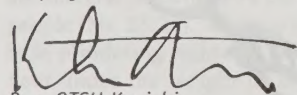
It goes without saying that citizens must bear the major economic burden of these nuclear plants. The waste from these plants still pose grave danger to all life for many thousands of years, and they become a threat to safety. For these reasons most advanced countries in Europe and North America are for abolishing nuclear power. However, in Asia there are still countries that promote nuclear power. Specifically, in a small country with 51 plants running, the Japanese government and big business are promoting nuclear power as national policy and now would like to export this to your country. With our concerns over abolishing nuclear power, we are appealing to our government to change its policy. Unfortunately, we have yet to see any success in this area.

In this situation, it will take great courage and conviction for President Chen and the government to stand by its decision last fall to halt construction on Taiwan's fourth reactor. But maintaining this decision will have an important affect in leading other Asian countries to abolish nuclear power.

Presently, there is a mind-set that is spreading on a global scale where people worship at the gods of "prosperity" and "an easy lifestyle." Humans, as well as all living creatures created by God, are sacrificed in the name of economic development. However, your government has taken a step in the direction of abolishing nuclear power by caring for people and nature. Our hope is that your government will not choose to renew the construction of this facility and will be led by its heart to pursue a different course. We sincerely offer our prayers of support for the National Christian Churches in Taiwan to strongly be a witness to abolishing nuclear power.

As people standing with those who have been sacrificed for prosperity, we continue to seek a change in the government's policy. We would be more than happy to have any other information in the future surrounding this problem and any ways we can be of support.

We pray that God continue to bless the National Christian Churches of Taiwan.



Rev. OTSU Kenichi
General Secretary
National Christian Council Japan

(Copies of this letter have been sent to the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the United Church of Japan.)

CCRAI Farewell

On April 20, over fifty people gathered together to have a thanksgiving celebration for twenty years of the work of CCRAI (the Center for Christian Response to Asian Issues). CCRAI was an NCC-J center. CCRAI was founded by the well-known Christian economist, Dr. Mikio Sumie, who also served as the Head of the Board of Directors. The purpose of CCRAI was to provide information on issues pertaining to the struggles of justice and peace of Japan's Asian neighbors. CCRAI had a large assortment of publications, pamphlets, articles, and other resource materials describing Asian issues as well as some of its own publications. The many CCRAI resources have now been donated to the library at Seikokai Shingakuen (the Anglican/Episcopal Seminary) in Setagaya, Tokyo. NCCJ wishes to thank all the supporters and members of CCRAI.



Ms. Sumie Iwata,
CCRAI Director
1992-1999

Dr. Mikio Sumie,
Founder of CCRAI

Future of NGOs

I am writing this at the dawn of the new century. Some say that this will be the century of the environment, and others say it will be the century of information. While people say that nations will be closer together, others predict a wider disintegration. I would like to emphasize, from my experiences and involvement, that this is the century of NGOs and networking. NGOs transcend national borders and involve other intergovernmental agencies. Moreover, many kinds of networks have been created throughout the world, including networks for humanitarian aid.

The International NGOs Conference on Humanitarian Assistance to North Korea (DPRK) was held in Tokyo last year from June 30 to July 2, 2000. It was the second of this kind following the Beijing Conference in May 1999. The main purpose of the meeting was to share information, experiences and perspectives about the present situation of food, agriculture and health in North Korea. It was also an opportunity to learn more about procedures, methods, the philosophies of humanitarian assistance of international NGOs, intergovernmental agencies and governmental organizations.

It was attended by a group of NGO representatives and church related organizations, including residents in North Korea from South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, USA, Canada, Germany and England as well as chief officials

of UN agencies in North Korea. The mixture of different backgrounds of the participants enriched the discussion and gave a memorable account of their impressive activities. What clearly came out of the meeting was that the humanitarian crisis in North Korea is still acute and unlikely to subside in the near future. We recognized the need to explore ways of moving in the near future from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development programs.

The situation of North Korea presents a complex and shifting scenario; we hope that this report will be helpful in further understanding the wider prospects of humanitarian assistance to North Korea.

We wish to express our deep appreciation to Interaction (USA), the Japanese NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC), Development Education Council of Japan (DECJ) and the Toyota Foundation for their generous support for the conference. We are very much grateful to all the participants who came all the way to attend the meeting. Many thanks also go to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan who kindly provided the space and facilities for the meeting.

Toshimasa Yamamoto

National Christian Council in Japan (NCC-J)

Member of Organizing Committee for the International NGOs

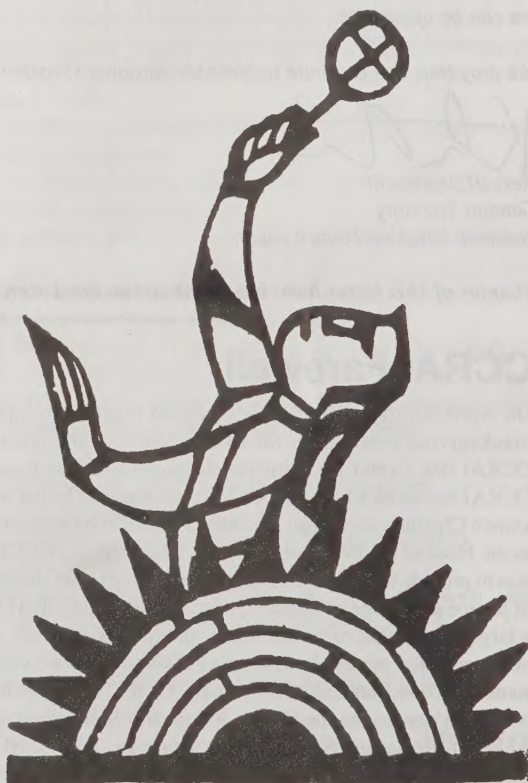
Jubilee 2000's New Direction

As the Jubilee 2000 campaign ended on December 31, 2000, the Executive Committee of Jubilee 2000 Japan decided to reorganize the present Japanese coalition into a network as a follow-up of the Jubilee 2000 campaign. The new coalition is called Network on Debt and Poverty and it will continue to take up the issues of debt.

Although the Japanese government finally made a pledge on June 28, 2000, to cancel the bilateral debt owed to Japan, the government has still kept a so-called Scheme of Grant Assistance for Debt Relief, which is nothing but a rescheduling of the unpayable debt by spreading it over 40 years. Therefore, among the many other tasks, the network will lobby the Japanese government in order to alter this plan and to implement an immediate and comprehensive cancellation of bilateral debt for all the most impoverished countries. The network will also take up the issues of ODA (official development assistance) debt of developing countries in Asia and Latin America. As part of its ODA, the Japanese government has been pouring yen loans into the governments of Asia and Latin America. Much of these loans have gone to the pockets of dictators and turned into odious debt.

NCCJ will be a part of the network and will continue to take up issues related with economic globalization. We need to keep in mind that UN figures indicate that 19,000 children die each day of preventable diseases in poor countries that bear the burden of illegitimate and unpayable external debt.

TGY



Indian Scholar* in Japan Reports on Dalit Theology

Purity, Pollution and Poverty

Dalits were considered impure due to the fact of their birth and polluting occupations. As a result of this, they were banned from the temples, religious processions, schools, public wells, and walking through Hindu streets.

Added to this is their uniform conditions of poverty. Because hierarchy was closely linked to hereditary occupations, Dalits were required to serve the other four castes and take up polluting occupations such as skinning, tanning, moving dead bodies and carrying night soil on their heads. In this way, the caste system also stipulated unequal economic rights and privileges.

In other words, the Dalits suffer untouchability and impoverishment under caste oppression. They were denied the "image of God" in them and were considered and treated as non-people and subhuman by the upper castes. There is a growing opposition against the Dalit's endeavors to establish their self-identity and right to self-determination as indigenous people of the land. Victimisation through caste atrocities and obstructions to their social progress and spiritual growth are rampant. Violations of their human and cultural rights and suppression of their protests for full social membership, deprivation of the fruits of their labour on land which they till and denial of fair wages to them are every day realities.

God's people are led in the precise direction of establishing justice and righteousness. The covenant of God with his people is to foster the right relations for doing justice. The basis of God's mission is the same. Justice, mercy and faith are integral principles of the Law in serving God and his people (Mt. 23:23). The true identity of being God's people is in promoting righteousness for doing justice to people bent under the weight of unjust structures and unequal power relations. Jesus Christ came fulfilling the same prophetic and divine concerns in his person and work. Jesus' call to repentance and belief in the Gospel called for fighting unjust structures and transforming them.

The Bible speaks of God as the liberator, who calls his people to struggle against all forces of evil that create oppression and discrimination. The central message of the Bible is deliverance (liberation) from 'sin', which is the result of breaking the covenant fellowship between God, people and nature.

Mission is the celebration of God's gift of life. Jesus Christ came that we may "have life and have it abundantly." This is life in all its fullness: spiritual, social, material, cultural and political. The hopes and aspirations of Dalits precisely reflect this cry for an abundant life. "Any assault on life — hunger, destitution, squalor, oppression, injustice — is an attack on God's will for the life of humankind. A denial of life, is therefore, a rejection of the God of life." (Gustavo Gutierrez). "Where Jesus is, there is life, there is abundant life, vigorous life, loved life, eternal life." (Moltmann)

Articulation of Faith in God: Dalit Theology

The consequences of caste system and the resultant untouchability imposed all kinds of disabilities on the Dalits. Lowered self-esteem, confusion of self-identity, self-hate, perception of the world as a hostile place and so forth make Dalits less human. In such a situation, there is a need for Dalit theology.

Dalit theology is a,

Theology **about** the Dalits and theological reflection about Christian responsibility to the oppressed and suppressed people;

Theology **for** the good news addressed to the oppressed and suppressed; and

Theology **from** the oppressed and suppressed people.

In other words, Dalit theology is produced by Dalits. It is based on their own experiences, their own suffering, their own aspirations, and their own hopes. It will narrate the story of their pathos and their protest against the socioeconomic injustices they have been subjected to throughout history. It anticipates liberation meaningful to them. It represents a radical discontinuity with the classical Indian Christian theology of the Brahmin (i.e., Brahminie) tradition.

The issue of Dalit consciousness is also an issue of Dalit identity. The question of identity is an integral part of any faith-affirmation. Any creed or confession or faith-affirmation must first lay bare the roots of the believing community. To confess that "once we were no people" is also an integral part of a confession before we come to the claim that "now we are God's people." It is only when we recognise our roots, our identity, that we become truly confessional.

The question of identity and roots is inseparably bound with the sense of belonging to a community. Therefore, what the Dalit theology is looking for is a community-identity, community-roots and community consciousness. The Dalit theology therefore, is a story of the afflictions, the bondage, the harsh treatment, the toil and the tears of the Dalits. It is characterised by pathos, by suffering. And therefore, Dalit theology is primarily a struggle for human dignity and the right to live as free people — people created in the image of God.

(*Excerpts from a talk by Rev. Suneel Bhanu Busi)

Rev. Suneel Bhanu Busi is a Lutheran pastor and seminary professor from India. He, himself, is a Dalit studying Buraku Theology in Japan. Presently, he is comparing the Dalits and the Buraku and will be following up his research at the Buraku Liberation Center in Osaka. He can be contacted at g029742@yamata.icu.ac.jp



Sister Helen Prejean Speaks: Dead Man Walking

Invited to speak at the annual Women's Conference in Amagi Sanso, January 26 – 28, 2001, Sr. Helen Prejean, C.S.J., author of the 1993 book, *Dead Man Walking* (later made into an Academy Award winning movie of the same name in 1995), captivated her audience. Conveying heart-wrenching stories in a rich "luziana" (Louisiana) accent and wrapping an impressive array of facts in an easy manner, Sr. Helen was focused, her presence potent.

She has told her tale literally hundreds of times. She began by emphasizing that, as a young nun in the Order of St. Joseph of Medaille, she was unconnected to poverty and considered herself apolitical. However, when she heard a speaker declare that "Jesus preached the good news to the poor, and integral to that was that they shall be poor no longer," Sr. Helen woke up to an entirely new way of looking at Jesus' ministry — and her own. She soon found herself in St. Thomas, a New Orleans housing project made up of poor black residents, where she both lived and taught.

Her story goes on from there. She shares how a colleague asked her one day in 1982 if she would simply write to an inmate on death-row at the Louisiana State Penitentiary and how she was gradually pulled into Patrick Sonnier's case. She talks of her fears, questions, outrage, activism, prayers, and empathy for both Patrick and his victims' families, and finally of her witnessing the state's execution of Patrick in the electric chair.

Though she has many more stories in her, it is this one that she tells most often. For in the life and death of Patrick Sonnier are everything that Sr. Helen has learned: how important it is to accompany a person, even a criminal, and to be faithful in friendship; of his human-ness — that whatever crime he had committed, he was worth more than the worst thing he had ever done; of the importance of reaching out to the victim's family and of their great need for support; of the inequalities in the legal system; of how torture can never be removed from capital punishment, no matter the method; and of how the death sentence simply increases the number of victims and grieving families.

Perhaps what makes Sr. Helen such a compelling speaker is that she has forced herself to look at the death penalty from every person's perspective: the politician's, the victim's, the victim's loved ones, the death-row inmate's, the inmate's

loved ones, and especially the general public's view.

Her conclusion is that, "Our culture make us choose sides, life or death. Yet the Gospel says you can be on the side of life. It is only the spiritual gift of reconciliation that can solve this dilemma."

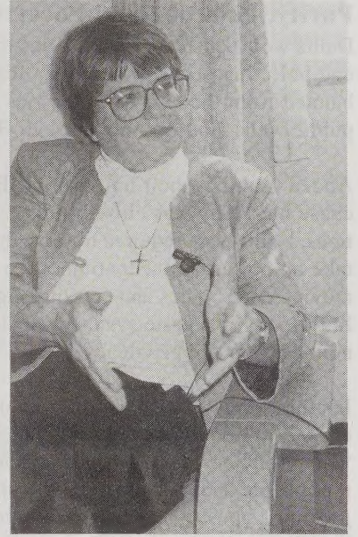
Her experience with victims' families bears out this terrible conflict. She discovered that not every family member of a victim wishes to push

for the death penalty, but society's expectation is that death is what will bring closure and relief. This too is a false belief. "Reconciliation," she says, "must come at a much deeper level."

Sr. Helen advocates life imprisonment for those convicted of capital crimes. In this way, humans cannot play God and decide when a person's potential has reached an end. Practically speaking, she also said that it is far more expensive to proceed with a capital case leading to death, paying for lawyers, forensics experts, sequestered juries, state review boards, two trials, etc, than to imprison a criminal for life.

At a well-attended event sponsored by Amnesty International on Jan. 30, Sr. Helen said she was proud to share the podium with Masaharu Harada. Harada's younger brother died in a traffic accident set up by Toshihiko Hasegawa to collect insurance money. Sixteen years ago, Harada was happy to hear that Hasegawa had received the death sentence. Since then, however, through an exchange of letters and meetings with Hasegawa, Harada has had a change of heart.

"We have not forgiven him. But I want him to live," he says, "and pay back in ways that I can see."



Sr. Helen's sister, Rev. Claudia, Kathryn, Sr. Helen, Maryna, and Charlie enjoying a traditional Japanese lunch.

Booked for speaking engagements two years in advance, Sr. Helen nevertheless is working on a second book telling the story of three innocent death-row inmates, and, most importantly for Japan, she has agreed to return to this country in April 2002, campaigning with Amnesty International and various Catholic institutions to abolish the death penalty in Japan.

Kathryn Tietz Treece is a writer, reflexologist, certified massage therapist, healing minister, and Chairperson of the West Tokyo Union Church.

Paintings for Life

この人は今も絵を
描いているのだろうか...

*I wonder if
this person
still paints...*



いのちの絵画展

Art From Death Row

The joint Protestant and Catholic committee to abolish the death penalty is working on campaign known as "Paintings for Life" ("Inochi no Kaigaten") which features death row inmates artwork. The Committee will also have a joint Catholic and Protestant prayer meeting on June 29 at St. Ignatius Catholic Church near Yotsuya Station in Tokyo from 7:00 PM. Mr. Sakae Menda will be the speaker. Mr. Menda was on death row for 34 years but the courts acknowledged in 1983 that he had been imprisoned for a crime that he did not commit. Mr. Menda, who now lives in Kyushu, says he has met over his 34 years on death row about 80 inmates in neighboring cells who were executed and he was always frightened that his time would come. (Neither Prisoners nor their families are ever told ahead of time when they will be executed.)

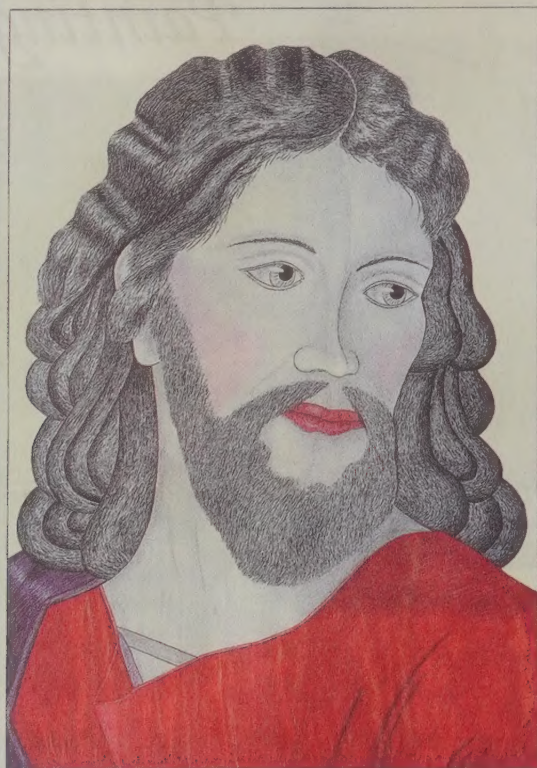
For more information, contact Rev Toshimasa Yamamoto at NCC-J email TYNCCJ@aol.com

*For someone who will be murdered,
it is shocking to know
the existence of living
death row prisoners;
the terror of one person
killing another person.*

*We are death row prisoners and
former death row prisoners,
presenting our art in this
exhibition called,
"Paintings for Life."*

*This exhibition is for the
memories of those people
victimized by crime,
for the victims,
the perpetrators,
and all of us together as
we continue to search for the
road that leads to our salvation.*

This is our only purpose and goal.



While humans can endure all sorts of trials such as poverty, a great deal of patience and troubles will follow when hiding fear and humiliation. It's a reality in here that each day things get more cruel. But on top of that, family and relatives turn their backs on death row prisoners. What's more, when a person's sentence has been finalized (not the day of execution, which can be some 20 years later), their lives become more and more isolated as their freedom to communicate with the outside is restricted.

For death row prisoners, until their execution is carried out and they are murdered, there is nothing but pain and sadness each day that will have no end. This is not the place to think over what one has done and then make a decision to completely change one's self. Death row prisoners are as different as cats and dogs (compared to regular prisoners). Instead of reflecting and changing one's self, a person is gradually reduced to that of an innocent child after many long years of living in isolation. The death penalty then calls for this "innocent human" to be murdered. There is no more cruel punishment than this form of punishment without compassion. My continual hope is that it will one day be abolished and I can lay down my pen.

Anonymous



釈尊道

Adjectives like, "cold blooded," "brutal," and "evil" have been continually used to describe those of us who have committed capital offences. I have heard this from speaking with many different people on death row. You don't hear someone say, "Hey, there's an old man living among you."

Death row inmates live solitary lives in small cells. Every day, all day long, they think about the crimes they have committed and the victims of their crime. And, one day their own execution will be carried out. On that day, a human who can be called, "cold blooded," "brutal," and "evil" does not exist. Hands and feet will be bound. The eyes will be blindfolded. And when the board under the feet gives way, the person will dangle in the air like a piece of meat for several minutes before dying. For more than 10 years, a small isolated cell be the last place these death row inmates exist in. When I look into the past, I can find no value in the death penalty. That is what I think.

Honda Takechi

I don't want to be misunderstood. For example, even if capital punishment is abolished and I'm given a reprieve, I'll never be able to return to the person I once was. My heart has nothing to find joy in. I live with the burden that I can never atone for the sins I committed against the victim and this very painful. Even now when I look at myself I only feel pain at what I have done. Yet, I'm human and I do not want to turn away from this pain. I just want to live.

Killing those of us on death row only repeats the murder we committed.

When we are executed, will that erase our crimes? Will that bring forgiveness for what we have done? I don't think so.

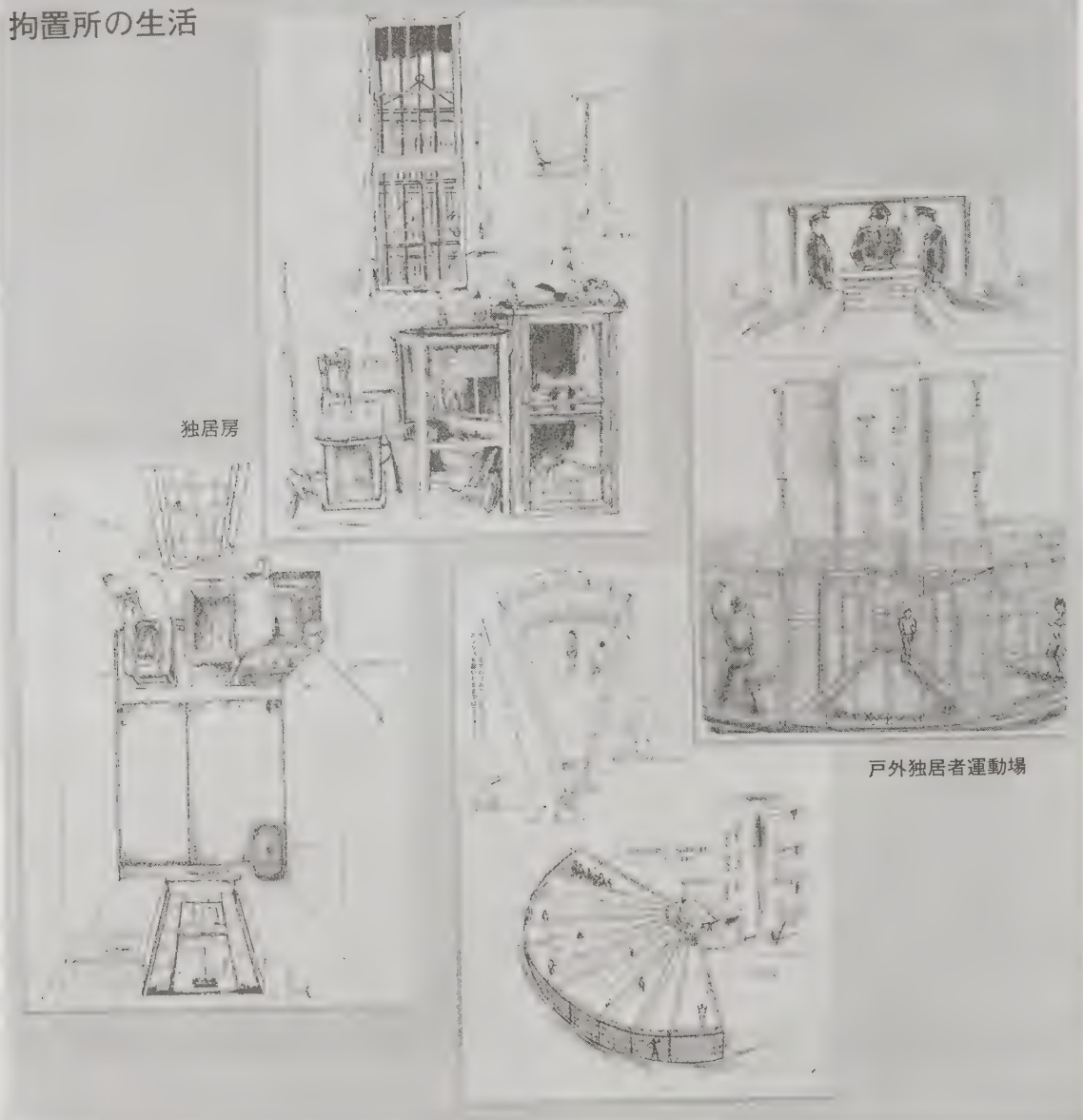
I just want to live and pay back what I have done. I want to pay it back with my own hands.

Kazuo Sagawa



Life on Death Row

拘置所の生活



Isolation Cell

The death row inmates in Japan live in isolation cells only about three mats in size (each mat is 85cm x 170cm). There is a toilet, a shelf, and a sink. The toilet doubles as a seat with the cover down. There is a cover for the sink so that it can be used as a table.

There is a small in the bottom of door in which food is pushed through. The inmates eat sitting on the toilet with the lid over the sink.

Exercise "Yard"

The area in which they are able to exercise is rather narrow and is really only meant for one person. There they can get some sun, jump rope, run, and walk.

All exercise areas lead back to a central location where all activity can be continuously monitored at times.

This information is taken from "Dictionary of Illustrations of Prison."

Meditation: Seeking Justice in Our International World

In the complex arena of international relations can we develop a system of universal justice? Can justice be universally objective or it always relative to one's own culture? As a Christian, who believes in one supreme God who is revealed to be just and morally right, I put my faith in universal justice, but then I also look to God as the final judge of all things. Gradually humankind, through the United Nations and the World Court, is trying to develop a universal system of justice that aims to be fair and impartial regardless of the cultural diversity involved, but most of the time we humans work within our culturally bound legal systems. It is difficult enough to find justice within our own imperfect judicial systems. How much more difficult it seems to me to find justice in a situation that is international and intercultural.

To demonstrate the complexity of an international and intercultural dispute I would like to consider the incident in Okinawa of a United States Marine suspected of lifting a sixteen-year-old school girl's skirt and taking pictures with his digital camera. Some may say this is a minor case, but as a result of this incident the Okinawa Prefecture Assembly passed unanimously the demand that the US reduce its forces in the prefecture. If the marine is tried, will justice prevail in this case? And who justice are talking about US military justice, Japanese justice, or justice that satisfies the victim, her family, and the local people in Okinawa.

In this international and intercultural context, many questions should be raised. First of all, the judicial

process and possible punishment will depend on whether the suspect is tried in a Japanese court or a US military court. Given the international nature of the case, why not try the individual in an international court? Perhaps an international court system is a solution for all international disputes, as we have seen in the recent high-profile cases of Bosnian war crimes and the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. But if the US military tries the suspect will they offer justice? Some may think that since the young man is a part of the military he will be lightly reprimanded. On the other hand, military justice has sometimes proven to be harsher than civilian justice is.

If the suspect is tried in a Japanese court will the fact that he is not a Japanese citizen make a difference? Would he be held less responsible for his actions because he is not Japanese? On the other hand, would there be bias against him because he is a foreigner? Does the fact that he is a US marine make a difference? Will this case stand alone or will the history of prior abuses of Okinawan females by US servicemen follow this case into the courtroom? Will the fact that the victim is an Okinawan make a difference in a Japanese court given the history of Japan where Okinawans have often been less valued than Japanese?

Will the victim's gender affect this case? Let us not overlook the fact that in many cultures gender biases are prevalent in sexual assault cases. Females in both the US and Japan, who were victims of sexual harassment of assaults, have sometimes felt that they did not receive

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Church of Former Yakuza

The movie titled "Oyabun wa Yesu-sama" (Jesus is Boss) was recently released in movie theatres across Japan. The production staff and cast consist of some well-known celebrities who demonstrate their enthusiasm to present this testimony of hope and love. Yet, they are not even Christian.

People change; some for better, some for worse, but all people change. One dramatic change took place in the hearts and lives of a few ex-Yakuzas who now profess Jesus to be their Lord, Savior, and best friend.

If given a chance, these men will expose their backs and arms to poignantly show you where they have come from. Each one has a collage of samurais, swords, dragons and tigers that colorfully span their body, a reminder of their "lifelong commitment" to the "family." Missing finger joints bear witness of sinister demands made by previous bosses to visibly demonstrate their repentance and continuing dedication in the face of a past "blunder." Such a physical legacy gives a glimpse of where they once roamed.

Christian Kyodai Narimasu Church is the home of Pastors Hideaki Matsuzawa and Arthur Hollands, who worked the harvest of these men and brought them together. Arthur Hollands

led the Cross-Bearing March from Okinawa to Hokkaido in 1992, during which several people sought to participate in the 6-month-long trek. To Arthur's amazement, a significant number had formerly been active members of organized crime and had since desperately sought some way out of their horrific bondage. Arthur's passion to deliver the Gospel of Jesus' love served as their invitation to a new life of forgiveness and freedom. (Incidentally, no mention is made of Arthur Hollands in the movie.)

Each man professed how Jesus had taken their place on the cross, how such treatment would have been just punishment for the crimes they themselves committed. This testimony prompted Hollands and Matsuzawa in naming the band of Christian renegade criminals after Barrabas, the thief who was freed in exchange for Jesus. Subsequently, the men of "Mission Barrabas" have renewed the same dedication to their new boss – Jesus Christ – and some presently guard their own flocks as ordained ministers.

Jonathan Rasmussen. Was raised in Kyoto by parents who served as Lutheran missionaries. He presently works in a Japanese medical company in Tokyo, and has attended Christ's Kyodai Narimasu Church since January 2000.

Food Banks Hosts Free Swing Concert

On Saturday it snowed for the first time in 25 years while the cherry blossoms were in full bloom in Tokyo. A pretty site to be sure, but not a reassuring sign for the organisers of an outdoor concert scheduled for Sunday. Craig Thompson, the vocalist for the event said, "I just prayed Saturday night and asked God to take care of everything. And, well, you know the rest is history."

The weather for the concert was perfect. It was hard to believe that just a day before people had been slugging through the streets in the cold rain and snow. Blue skies and a light breeze brought many people to Hibiya Park to come and listen to the Hi-Lite All Stars and Craig Thompson sing jazz and swing tunes. The Tokyo Dance Society also came out to put on a good performance taking some of the older guests back to their high school days.

This was the first outdoor concert hosted by Food Bank Japan. The main reason was to give people an enjoyable event while educating them about food banking. Because this is a new concept to Japan, many people believe it is just like a bank where deposits can be made. "So, how much interest will I get for my daikon (giant radish)?" The educational process continues.

Over 800 people came throughout the afternoon to hear the music and learn about Food Bank Japan. Most of these people did not know about the concert until they heard the music and wandered over to the band shell. These were the people that Food Bank Japan wanted to reach out to, people who would not normally come into contact with such an organisation on their own.



Vocalists Craig Thompson in his yellow zoot suit along the Hi-Lite All Stars being introduced by Charles McJilton

May 2001 will mark the first anniversary of Food Bank Japan. It has been a good year with many changes. Most of the members wondered if it would really happen. However, it seems that at each point there have been people and organisations that have come through in the nick of time. Caritas Japan (a Catholic lay organisation) donated ¥600,000 for operations. Later, a member of Caritas Japan gave a room for the warehouse and office rent free until the building will be torn down. Many other churches such as St. Albans, Tokyo Union Church and West Tokyo Union Church have made generous donations. In addition, an executive from Beacon Communications read about Food Bank Japan and decided to create an ad campaign pro bono. Lastly, there have been countless anonymous individuals who have helped in big and small ways. No one person has done it all; it truly has been a team effort.

Check out the web site at www.FoodBankJapan.org for more information. The site will have a new look in June. CEM



Rosal and victim shortly before his death.

Tragedy recently struck Rosal. As you may have read in JCAN 728, Rosal is now appealing her conviction for murder. She has been held in custody since November, 1997. She has had no contact with her daughter (now age 8) and letters from her family in the Philippines are rare.

Tragedy for Rosal

In April, a Japanese TV news station obtained permission from Rosal to go to the Philippines and interview her mother as part of a documentary they were producing. However, when they went to meet the mother they were told she had died in October of last year of ovarian cancer. The death had come rather quick after it was discovered in August. The family did not know if they should tell Rosal. They were concerned about the impact of the news on her and the outcome of the trial.

The co-representative for the Rosal Ad Hoc Committee, along with the reporter, went and informed Rosal of her mother's death. As one can imagine, it was a very difficult situation. However, even though visitations are normally limited to a maximum 10 minutes, after consulting with the guard about the situation he allowed some extra time for the visit.

Ironically, there was talk between this co-representative and Rosal about her mother coming to Japan to visit. Rosal had not heard from her mother for some time and was wondering what happened. While it was not a custom in their family to write letters, Rosal was especially close to her mother. However, she wanted to wait until she was free to see her mother and so she declined the offer. The consolation in her mother's death is that Rosal now knows the reason for the silence was not angry or disappointment in her.

Rosal testified in court on May 7 and her court date will be June 6. For more information about the trial and ways to support her contact RosalAdHoc@aol.com or www2.gol.com/users/rosal CEM

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justice because of inherent bias for males in their culture. One can also make the case for a male bias in the subculture of the US military. The lack of a serious response to previous sexual assault cases by the US military commanders supports this opinion.

For example, in 1995 when three US servicemen gang raped a 12-year-old Okinawan elementary school girl, Admiral Richard C. Macke, Pacific Commander in Chief, commented to the press that the rapists might better have paid for a prostitute instead of renting a car in order to abduct their victim (The Japan Times, Feb. 23, 2001). Such a comment clearly demonstrates the commander's insensitivity toward women and might lead one to suspect that this attitude at the top is then reflected through the command.

I would like us to consider what it means to apply biblical justice to the case of the marine and the 16-year-old girl. Neither Japan's legal system nor the US military legal system are based on biblical justice, although both systems have been influenced to a degree by values and principles from the Judeo-Christian culture. Japan's modern judicial system was shaped by the US occupation after World War II. But when we speak of biblical justice are talking about the justice of the Hebrew scriptures or the Christian scriptures? The Mosaic laws tend to be harsher on sexual offences than the teachings of Jesus. Does Jesus' dictum, "Judge not, and you will not be judged" apply to this case? Should the perpetrator get off scott-free? I do

not think many Japanese nor the US military would agree that this young man should not be judged. We must make judgments if an individual has been sexually abused. Adults, even young men, should be held accountable for their actions.

If the accused is found to be guilty I think cross-culturally there is a general feeling that there should be a penalty, but what is a just penalty for this offence? Penalties can be constructive if they help to amend the wrong done, to change the guilty individual's behavior

in the future, and act as a deterrent for others. Having said this, let us remember that Jesus' teaching on mercy is a warning against extreme punitive measures.

Other teachings of Jesus will further assist us in finding a sense of universal justice when it comes to establishing a penalty. The act of confession and forgiveness, which Jesus insisted, should be the aim of this kind of judicial proceeding in order to bring healing for both victim and the accused. Lastly, may I suggest Jesus' teaching: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Given the possi-

bility of a court establishing the marine's guilt, I would hope that those in the judicial system responsible for finding a just penalty would be guided by the Golden Rule. This rule, which has its equivalent in many other religions, is only a principle but will help guide us toward that ideal of universal justice.

Rev. Richard Stinson is a UMC missionary teaching at Kwansei Gakuin in Kobe. He has a doctorate in multiculturalism.



New Jesus Video for Children Available

There have been many requests to make a children's version of the Jesus film. In response to this the US Campus Crusade for Christ Jesus Project made "The Story of Jesus for Children" is now available in English and Japanese. These films are tools to help denominations and para-churches succeed in mobilizing church workers to reach children. Even adults with little exposure to Christianity will understand and enjoy this captivating retelling of the story of Jesus.

The Story

The story is told through the eyes of children who might have lived during the time Jesus was here on earth. They hear the stories of a man from Nazareth who brings a young girl back to life. They are there when he feeds 5,000 people and they also see this same

man betrayed, wrongly accused, crucified, and buried. But, they remember the promise this man made that they will see him again and they believe. Please visit our web site for more details. www.jesusforchildren.org

Special Discount

The Japanese version is available for ¥1,600. A free training video is also available.

Tel: +81 42 903-3003

Fax: +81 42 926-0895

Email: jccmatl@d7.dion.ne.jp

Kazuyoshi Kurihara, President
Japan Campus Crusade for Christ

New Tokyo Bishop for the Nihon Seikokai

On March 31, at Mitaka-Dai in Tokyo, over 800 people braved the snow to gather in the new chapel of St. Margaret's Girls School for the consecration service of the new Bishop of Tokyo Diocese in the Nippon Seikokai (NSKK, the Anglican /Episcopal Church in Japan). In contrast with the cherry blossoms, which had just bloomed the day before, the unusual spring blizzard was a surprise; but according to the two visiting bishops from Korea, the snow was a "blessing from God" for the day's special service.



Bishop Ueda blessing the gifts

The procession at the beginning of the service was impressive, with everyone dressed in cassocks and surplices and only Rev. Ueda wearing a simple white robe. Hymns, prayers, and presentations were all part of the ceremony. The primate of the NSKK, Bishop John Furumoto (the bishop of Kobe), led the presentation and the examination. Rev. Yamano and Rev. Sasamori, two of the first three women to be ordained in the NSKK had special roles in the ceremony, with Rev. Yamano functioning as the Bishop's chaplain. Bishop Ihloff from Maryland (a companion diocese of Tokyo Diocese) along with other visiting bishops from Korea and Hong Kong, were distinguished guests. During the consecration, hands were laid upon Rev. Ueda as he was consecrated bishop. After more prayers and being given a certificate of his ordination, he was presented with a Bible and symbols of his office: a chemere, a cross, a stole, a chalice and paten, salt, and oil. Fr. Bartholomew Takeuchi, the Dean of the Cathedral of St. Andrew, handed the new Bishop a ring during the enthronement; he was also given a crosier by retiring Bishop John Takeda, as a sign that he is a "shepherd of the flock." This shepherd symbolism was central to the service, as the Gospel reading for the day was also taken from John 21:15 where Jesus tells his disciples to "feed my sheep."

After being consecrated, Bishop Ueda led the congregation in the Passing of the Peace; going down the aisles of the chapel, he greeted as many people as he could with a cheerful smile and bow. The offering was collected as many different choirs sang (the collection was to go to the Bishops' Fund of the NSKK). The communion service was also impressive, as a large number of priests and deacons served. Among the servers was Christie Demura, a female deacon from the United States who will be ordained as a priest in the Nippon Seikokai on June 10 this year. Among the overflowing congregation were Buddhists from the World Conference



ベテロと鍵 Peter & the Keys

on Religion and Peace, Roman Catholic Cardinal Shirayanagi, and representatives from the YMCA, NCC-J, the Asian Rural Institute. Also, various other schools and organizations, as well as international guests including Rev. Ahn Jae Wong, Director of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) attended. The special guests received a rose to wear on their lapel. There so many people that a special room was set up with closed-circuit television so everyone could still participate in the service.

Bishop Ueda has had many multicultural and ecumenical experiences during his career. He studied at Cambridge and also had some training at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute in Geneva, Switzerland. He has served in many Christian organizations such as the Tokyo YMCA and NCC-J, where he was Executive Secretary for Mission and Service. Rev. Ueda also served as the General Secretary of the NSKK Provincial Office, and was on the staff of CCA in charge of Development and Service. Before he was elected bishop, Rev. Ueda most recently worked as the director of the Asian Rural Institute, a Christian-based training institute for rural leaders from developing countries in Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world who come together for one year to learn community organizing and organic farming techniques. Rev. Ueda often said he knew nothing about farming but was there to learn as much as he could along with the others. In the morning he would often be found alongside the students taking his turn with the chores, his favorite being mopping the floors. Needless to say, this often shocked new participants, mainly from Asian countries, who were rather taken aback to see their director working alongside them! But this is part of ARI's motto, "That we may all be one"—everyone works together. Rev. Ueda strongly upheld that belief in practice as well as in speech. His gifts in working with other cultures and with other denominations will serve him well as the new Bishop of Tokyo.

It is with warmest congratulations that we all at JCAN offer blessings and prayers to Ueda Shukyo (Bishop Ueda) as the new Bishop of Tokyo. CGY

Continued from page 1

One day, a rope will be placed around their neck and on command the trapdoor will give way. If the rope has been properly measured the fall will snap the neck resulting in immediate death. If the length is wrong, the prisoner will either die a slow death by asphyxiation or his head will be ripped from his body. The scenario for the death has already been scripted; the only unknown is the timing of the execution of that scene.

Each day these men wait not knowing if they have already seen their last nightfall. "One day at time" is not slogan to be mouthed but a reality they live. There will be no prior notification. No last meal. No farewells to family and loved ones, except perhaps a letter dashed off before they are led away. In one notorious execution, a mother came for her monthly visit given only to family members. When she arrived she was told to come back in the afternoon because her son was busy. Upon returning that afternoon she was told her son had been executed that morning. Why does the state need to create more victims to "execute" justice?

Grant it, the victims never knew when they would die and so why should the same consideration be given to the convicted? However, where is the humanity in making prisoners relive their execution each day? Where is the potential for change? Where is the possibility for redemption and reconciliation that Jesus speaks of?

As Christians we should, by the very nature of our faith, have an inherent interest in the death penalty. Our saviour did not ride off into the sunset to the cheers of disciples and followers. Tortured, naked, abandoned, and left to die of asphyxiation, that was his fate. The cross is a symbol of capital punishment.

But the cross has been "mainstreamed," the terror of its application has been stripped away. Only if you face a crucifix will you be reminded that its purpose was a slow, humiliated death.

As Sr. Helen Prejean says, we are confronted with the dilemma of retribution and redemption. On the one hand we are morally outraged at the nature of the crime. We, naturally, cry out for punishment. On the other hand, state sponsored killing is just that: murder. It offers no chance for redemption or reconciliation. Are we to lower ourselves to the level of the criminal? Have we lost our belief in the possibility for redemption? Have we taken the place of God? If not, why do we allow a secular institution mete out eternal judgement which we believe reserved for God alone?

The very same hands that took life created the art within these pages. Yet, their art can serve to remind us that change and redemption are always possible as long as one walks the earth. Death is final; it is the last arbitrator of all possibilities. Death can never bring back life.

Two thousand years ago on that Friday, no one would have thought the naked, tortured, and abandoned figure on the cross would live again in the hearts of people for ages to come. Yet he does, and we are here.

Tonight as I look out my kitchen window I wonder, will these men be here again tomorrow night? I am sure they wonder too.

Managing Editor



When we say "Hiroshima"

When we say "Hiroshima"

do people answer, gently,

"Ah, Hiroshima?"

Say "Hiroshima," and hear "Pearl Harbor"

Say "Hiroshima," and hear "Rape of Nanking"

Say "Hiroshima," and hear of women and children in Manila

thrown into trenches, doused with gasoline, and burned alive.

Say "Hiroshima,"

and hear echoes of blood and fire.

Say "Hiroshima,"

and we don't hear, gently,

"Ah, Hiroshima."

In chorus, Asian's dead and her voiceless masses spit out the anger

of all those we made victims.

That we may say "Hiroshima,"

"Ah, Hiroshima,"

we must in fact lay down

the arms we were supposed to lay down.

We must get rid of all foreign bases.

Until that day Hiroshima

will be a city of cruelty and bitter bad faith.

And we will be pariahs

burning with remnant radioactivity.

That we may say "Hiroshima"

and hear in reply, gently,

"Ah, Hiroshima,"

we first must

wash the blood

off our own hands.

by Sadako Kurihara

From Hiroshima in Memoriam and Today.

See review on page 18



Hiroshima in Memoriam and Today: A Testament for Peace for the World

Edited by Hitoshi Takayama, with the cooperation of Hiroshima citizens

No one who reads this book will remain unmoved by its terrible accounts of human suffering and its urgent warning to present to future generations.

E.G. Whitlam, Former Prime Minister of Australia.

This book was written to educate people about the importance of peace. Although this is not a new topic, the way the book gathers so many different essays and messages makes it a different type of book to read — educational, interesting, and powerful.

Hitoshi Takayama, the editor, was born in Hiroshima and was 15 when the atomic bomb was dropped. He later became a teacher and has been treated off and on for illness at the A-bomb Hospital. Since his retirement, he has worked full time for peace education.

Letters were sent out inviting people to respond to the horrors of Hiroshima. Letters and earlier editions of the book were sent to embassies, prime ministers, outstanding citizens, presidents, mayors, the Pope, recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize and, of course, the A-bomb survivors. Almost all responded by sending a message or an essay reflecting honestly on what the tragedy of Hiroshima has meant to them.

Arnold Joseph Toynbee says, "dropping of the bomb was an utterly wicked act." Barbara Reynolds, a Quaker writer and pacifist, says, "the world owes a debt to the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki because we need their continued appeals." Gunther Anders, an Austrian philosopher and novelist, comments that the bombing of Hiroshima was not only the destruction of one city but of every city and population. Tibor Barther, Moderator of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in Hungary, makes a marvelous Christian statement on the importance of peace. The Christian churches in Hungary at the Christian Peace Conference decided to remember the anniversary of the first use of atomic weapons in August each year.

The book also includes a Korean survivor's appeal, which is significant because many Koreans were forcibly brought over from Korea to Japan before and during the war to work as slave laborers. Although many suffered from the A-bomb, often their stories are forgotten.

Mitsuo Okamoto, professor of Peace Studies at Hiroshima Shudo University, writes a moving and well-researched essay concerning the debate in 1994-95 over an exhibition of the Enola Gay at the Smithsonian Museum. The museum had intended to focus on both sides of the event and present a full exhibit. The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had even lent artifacts for the exhibition. However, they wanted their section to focus on peace and make it clear that nuclear weapons do have a lingering effect as well as showing the atrocity of war.

The American Legion, however, said that the dropping of the bombs "saved the lives of over one million US soldiers and still more Japanese." They went on to say the Enola Gay symbolizes the end of the war and there was "no need to display the miserable fate of people under a mushroom cloud." Through the efforts of veterans, some politicians, and the mass media, the US Senate passed a resolution including a description of "...the role of the Enola Gay in helping to bring World War Two to a merciful end." Professor Okamoto questions whether one can call the killing of over 200,000 noncombatant citizens "merciful."

It is clear, however, that the veterans did not represent the voice of all Americans. Professor Okamoto was teaching at Arizona State University in 1994 during the discussion of the exhibition. Many students questioned the notion of a "just war" and the use of the bomb. They realized the US was not immune to making mistakes. For his part, he taught Japan's history of colonizing Taiwan and Korea with merciless oppression, the rape of Nanjing, the secret medical experiments of Army Unit 731, the Bataan Death March, and other war crimes of the Japanese Imperial Army.



Two field commanders, General Douglas MacArthur and Curtis LeMay, were convinced an invasion was not necessary. They believed Japan would surrender no later than September 1945 because many cities had already been destroyed by firebombs. MacArthur said that to use atomic bombs on urban targets was "completely unnecessary from a military point of view." Two other military leaders expressed similar opinions. A US strategic bombing survey stated the Japan would have surrendered if the atomic bombs had not been dropped.

The essay closes with lessons to be learned from Hiroshima and the pain of past sins. Japan sinned at Pearl Harbor and other neighboring Asian countries. The US sinned in Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Vietnam. But as nations, neither Japan nor the US will admit its sins. "But herein lies the morality and greatness of a nation; whether it can officially admit its sins of the past. Otherwise, national cover-ups and uncritical justifications can easily lead to new mistakes," points out Okamoto.

The editor of this volume is a lay member of the Lutheran Church of Japan. David Swain, a former United Methodist missionary, did the final text editing. He served on the NCC-J Peace and Nuclear Issues Committee from 1982 to 1992.

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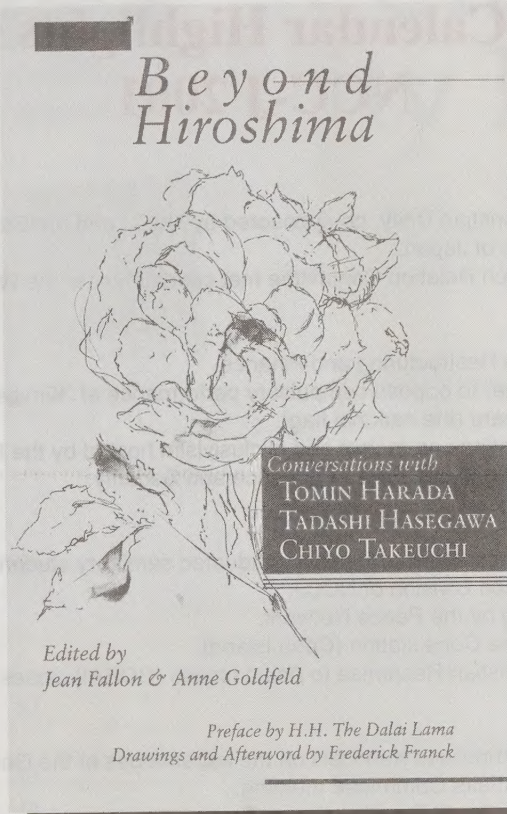
Beyond Hiroshima

He has sent me to give them a garland of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning.
Isaiah 61:1, 3

Beyond Hiroshima was published in 1999 and edited by Sr. Jean Fallon and Anne Goldfield, with a preface by the Dalai Lama. The book was written for the people of Cambodia, who are emerging from war, genocide, and displacement. Only 54 pages long, it is illustrated throughout with drawings that accompany the stories of three Japanese people intimately involved with the tragedy of Hiroshima, two of them as survivors of the atomic bombing. Two out of the three, Dr. Harada and Ms. Takeuchi, died before the book was printed. Through sharing the stories of their lives and their work for peace, they have offered a precious gift not only to Cambodia but also to the whole world.

Dr. Tomin Harada was a medical doctor from Hiroshima who served as an army surgeon from 1938 to 1945. After Japan lost the war, he returned to Hiroshima to build a hospital. Dr. Harada testifies that before the bomb was dropped, the population of Hiroshima was 350,000; of these, 150,000 were killed instantly when the bomb was dropped and 50,000 died from complications over the following five years. When a group of young girls (known as the "Hiroshima Maidens") were invited by Jewish and Quaker groups to visit Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York for reconstructive surgery, Dr. Harada accompanied them and remained in the US for seven months. The skills he acquired there came in useful during the 1960s when people wounded during the Vietnam War were often brought to Japan for treatment. Dr. Harada became the first chairperson of the Board of Directors of the World Friendship Center (a guest-house and conference center for visitors to Hiroshima), and in this book shares some of his experiences with visitors to the center, particularly an American Quaker named Barbara Reynolds. He closes his testimony by saying, "Words are not as important as what we do. It is our actions that speak."

Father Tadashi Hasegawa spent his entire life in Hiroshima. When the bomb fell he was fourteen, and was just two kilometers from the epicenter. Tadashi was injured in the blast and his family made their way to a park near to where the Jesuit Fathers were opening their house to as many survivors as they could take in. A Father Pedro Arupe visited him, cleaned his wounds and gave him medicine. Then the family's makeshift dwelling was swept away by a typhoon, and Tadashi's condition grew worse and worse. Another Jesuit, Father Nevere, came and prayed over him as he lay dying. He baptized Tadashi. The



boy's wounds were very severe, he was so badly burned that his bones were exposed and there were maggots all over him, yet he fell into a deep sleep. To the amazement of his family and the priests, within a week he miraculously began to heal. It was December 6, the feast of St. Nicholas.

Tadashi's father was concerned that his sister, who had died in the bombing, would be in the Buddhist paradise, while his son would go to the Christian heaven. Father Arupe, however, assured the parents that "through the suffering of others we can discover God, learn to love others, and change ourselves for the better." On June 23, 1946, the Feast of St. John, Tadashi's whole family was baptized. Later Tadashi became a seminarian and a priest at the Peace cathedral in Hiroshima. He closes his testimony with these words, "As a priest and a survivor of the bomb, I feel that my special obligation is to offer prayers constantly for all those who suffer in this world. I believe in a love that forgives."

Chiyo Takeuchi remembers the bomb dropping and her body being penetrated by thousands of pieces of glass. She wandered around looking for help, believing that Japan must have dropped the bomb because she could not believe that America, a Christian nation, could ever carry out such an act. After hearing that the USA was responsible after all, she was angry because she felt it was such a crime against humanity. But after thinking and thinking about it, she concluded that if Japan had had the bomb, it would have probably used it too. "It is not really this nation or that nation that is wrong. It is war itself that is evil. We need to look at war as the enemy ... and make all wars cease."

Chiyo closes another chapter of the book with words about the Cambodian people that are relevant to all of us. She says, "No matter how terrible their situation is and in spite of what they are experiencing, each one of them has within them this goodness of the heart ... when you stand before so many who have lost their lives what is important is that the people left alive do not let their lives be lost, do not let these deaths be in vain. Through ourselves we can work for peace. Even if we cannot restore peace, perhaps our children will."

An interview with Sr. Jean as well as a book review is in JCAN #728. The book called *The Hidden Battle of Leyte: The Picture Diary of a Girl Taken by the Japanese Military* by Remedios Felicias is a story of a Filipina comfort woman. It was a project supervised by Chiemo Takemi. Sr. Jean helped with the Japanese translation.



Calendar Highlights NCC-J 2001



January

- 21 Day of Prayer for Christian Unity, co-sponsored by NCCJ and the Catholic Bishop's Conference of Japan.
- 26 NCCJ German Church Relation Committee met candidates for the WCC Scholarship.

February

- 12 NCCJ Committee on Restructuring and Finance.
- 17 Rally for the "Hot Line" to oppose compulsory performance of "Kimigayo" (the national anthem) and using the Hinomaru (the national flag).
- 19, 24 Series of lecture meetings on racism and exclusivism hosted by the Peace Network.
- 26-March 3 WCC meeting in Kyoto: North East Asia Peace and Security.

March

- 16 Lecture meeting on ecumenism for newly graduated seminary students organized by the Christian Education Division of NCCJ.
- 18-20 Non-violence training by the Peace Network.
- 19-24 NCCJ/ NCC Philippine Consultation (Cebu Island).
- 31 NCCJ Center for Christian Response to Asian Issues (CCRAI) closes after 19 years of service.

April

- 3 Lecture meeting by Anneliese Kaminski on the experiences of the German Church.
- 5 NCCJ International Affairs Committee meeting.
- 7 Paintings of Life (Anti-Death Penalty) Campaign meeting.
- 11-17 Kim Young Jin (South Korea National Assembly Member) holds hunger strike in front of Japanese Diet building to protest the textbook issue.
- 20 Thanksgiving reception for NCCJ Center for Christian Response to Asian Issues (CCRAI) hosted by NCCJ
- 27 Sit-in protest on textbook issues in front of Diet building by representatives of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan and "ex-comfort women" from South Korea.

May

- 1 Urgent Women's Meeting on textbook issues by VAWW-Net Japan (Violence Against Women during the Wartime)
- 3 Citizen's Rally on Article 9 of Japanese Constitution

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